



**WINTER 2002**

## **THE DOWNEASTER BRINGS PASSENGER RAIL BACK TO THE SEACOAST REGION**

*Anticipated Portland to Boston Run Includes Stops in Dover, Durham and Exeter*



With all of the fanfare of a political rally, Amtrak's *Downeaster* began its long-awaited Portland to Boston passenger rail service on December 14. The inaugural run was greeted by large and enthusiastic crowds, high school bands and local officials at regular stops that include Exeter, UNH/Durham and Dover in New Hampshire.

"This is a great day for New Hampshire," Governor Jeanne Shaheen said when the *Downeaster* made its first stop in Exeter. Thanking the NH Department of Transportation for working with local officials to make the New Hampshire stops possible, Governor Shaheen said the rail option is not going to replace buses or cars, "...but it is a wonderful addition to the transportation mix in New Hampshire. Let's buy tickets and let's ride."

Passengers last rode trains from Maine and New Hampshire to Boston in 1969. More than 4,300 people took the train during the first five days of operations, an average of 860 passengers a day. Amtrak estimates that 320,000 will ride the *Downeaster* annually, or an average of 877 a day. Other stops include Haverhill, Massachusetts, and Wells, Old Orchard Beach, and Saco, Maine. Durham is a weekend only (Friday thru Sunday) stop and Old Orchard Beach is a summer only stop. The *Downeaster* makes four round trips each day between Portland and North Station in Boston. The train consists of four comfortable passenger cars with food service.

Steve Piper, DOT's Bureau of Construction Contract Administrator, was at the Dover station on Chestnut Street for the first public run early on the morning of Saturday, December 15. He reported

*(continued on page 19)*



**The inaugural run on December 14 marked the first time a passenger train had stopped in Exeter since the late-1960's. Then it was on to Durham and Dover for the *Downeaster* on its Boston to Portland run.**



**Crew foreman Dennis Hisler (left) and Ed Welch, Administrator of Bridge Maintenance, discuss the challenges and admire the result of rebuilding this 150-year old twin-arch stone bridge in Hillsborough.**

## **Bridge Maintenance Crew Rebuilds Twin-Arch Stone Bridge In Hillsborough**

"I think it looks spectacular!" Those were the words of a nearby Hillsborough resident who had followed the efforts of an NHDOT Bridge Maintenance crew through the summer and fall of 2001 to painstakingly rebuild a historic twin-arch stone bridge.

The 1850's-era bridge on Second New Hampshire Turnpike Road had been badly in need of repairs. One arch was sagging and its structural integrity was suspect.

This kind of specialized labor-intensive project usually makes private contractors leery. Once again the Bureau of Bridge Maintenance stepped forward to do the job.

*(continued on page 4)*



## Commissioner's Corner

by  
**Carol A. Murray**

### FOR THE RECORD: ANNUAL REPORTS PROVIDE VITAL INFORMATION

Let's face it. Annual reports, whether of the private industry or the state agency variety, are hardly stimulating reading. They often focus on substance over style and seldom leave the reader wanting more.

But even if they are not widely read and are destined to collect dust on many a shelf, annual reports do serve an important purpose. They provide a vital resource for those seeking information, and a historical record of a 12-month period of time in the life of an agency or business. Something that those reading them decades from now can look to for important historical reference and insight.

But possibly just as important, annual reports require state agencies to look at themselves more closely, to see where they've been, where they are and where they are going. By their very nature, annual reports accentuate the positive and downplay the negative. But the self-examination forces those involved to recognize both their shortcomings and where improvements can be made.

The just completed New Hampshire Department of Transportation's Annual Report for the 2001 Fiscal Year (ending June 30) offers readers such information as: detailed listings of NHDOT receipts and expenditures; a breakdown of the allocation of Highway Block Grant Aid to New Hampshire cities and towns; legislation passed into law during the 2001 session that affect transportation; a graph of construction project expenditures since 1992; and an organizational chart with key contacts and telephone numbers throughout the agency.

Perhaps most insightful is reviewing the wide array

of projects and challenges addressed by the several bureaus within the New Hampshire Department of Transportation's five Divisions – Project Development, Operations, Public Works and Transportation, Aeronautics and Administration.

One of the most significant transportation milestones in the 2001 Fiscal Year was the completion of the \$190 million widening of NH Route 101 between Epping and the Seacoast Region. For the first time ever, motorists traveling east-west in New Hampshire can enjoy driving on a safer divided highway between Interstates 93 and 95. Major bridge and highway improvement projects also progressed in Hillsborough (bypass), Conway (new North-South Local Road), Thornton-Woodstock (I-93), and Sunapee-Grantham (I-89).

Major efforts were also focused on improving other modes of transportation. Construction of passenger rail stations in Dover, Durham and Exeter helped prepare for the start-up of the Portland to Boston *Downeaster*. Planning and preliminary engineering also continued for the planned extension of commuter rail service from Lowell, Massachusetts to Nashua.

In the Operations Division, highway maintenance forces once again answered the call of a challenging winter season and kept traffic moving. The Turnpikes Bureau processed another record year of traffic.

The Aeronautic Division oversaw the planning and construction of a regional Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting training facility in Concord.

Internally, the Human Resources Bureau implemented safety training for employees in 19 different subject areas.

One noticeable improvement in customer service by the NHDOT is the hiring of a webmaster and the significant improvement of the Department's web site. It is there, at [www.nhdot.com](http://www.nhdot.com), where you can access the entire 2001 annual report, as well as several NHDOT publications and maps, traveler information, NHDOT policies and procedures and news releases.

I encourage you to check it out.



*Committed to Excellence,  
Safety, Innovation, and the Future.*

### Winter 2002

Governor.....Jeanne Shaheen  
Commissioner.....Carol Murray  
Assistant Commissioner.....Gilbert Rogers  
On the Move Editor.....Bill Boynton

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## NHDOT TRANSPORTATION SECURITY TASK FORCE BEGINS WORK

In response to the September 11 terrorist acts against the United States and Governor Shaheen's subsequent call for an evaluation of New Hampshire's readiness to respond, NHDOT Commissioner Carol Murray called upon several NHDOT employees to serve on an internal "Transportation Security Task Force".

The mission of the Task Force, which is chaired by NHDOT Assistant Director of Operations Ken Kyle, is to take a closer look at discovering, evaluating and formulating the Department's policies and response plans in dealing with all matters of security. It will complement work being done by New Hampshire's Commission on Preparedness and Security, which includes Commissioner Murray.

Among the responsibilities of the Task Force are:

- Updating and writing all NHDOT emergency response policies and plans.
- Prioritizing, formulating, and making recommendations on the security of New Hampshire's transportation infrastructure assets.
- Establishing documents, policies, and protocols for coordinating security-related efforts with other State agencies and municipalities.
- Reviewing and updating evacuations plans for critical areas and the Department's many facilities.
- Documenting, evaluating, and making recommendations for incidents concerning transportation security.

As part of the information gathering process, members of the NHDOT Transportation Security Task Force will be contacting various Bureaus, Districts and employees. Your cooperation is appreciated. Any general suggestions are welcome and should be sent to Task Force Chairman Ken Kyle.

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## Shirt Sale Raises \$1,452 for American Red Cross - Liberty Fund

*Editor's Note: With the assistance of Pam White and Lisa Sanborn in the Highway Maintenance Office, Assistant State Maintenance Engineer Caleb Dobbins organized a sale of shirts and sweatshirts with the NHDOT logo to raise money for the families affected by the September 11 terrorist attacks. More than 500 shirts and sweatshirts were sold, raising a total of \$1,452.55 for the American Red Cross Liberty Fund. Caleb has a personal interest in helping the cause in New York City. His brother Daniel Dobbins, a 15-year NYPD police officer, escaped injury at ground zero.*



December 13, 2001

Dear Mr. Dobbins,

Greater Manchester Chapter

On behalf of the American Red Cross, we thank you and the entire Department of Transportation force for the outstanding effort made, and the very generous contribution to, the Liberty Fund.

The Red Cross is still on site at ground zero twenty-four hours a day. Ten volunteers and one Emergency Response Vehicle from New Hampshire were activated immediately and we still have volunteers from NH on site. The effort to provide food, shelter, and other emergency services, as well as mental health counseling to survivors and family members of this catastrophe is still underway and ongoing.

As we continue the arduous rescue effort in New York City, and the ongoing relief effort to the many thousands of Americans who have been affected by this tragedy nationwide, the Red Cross is very much aware of the new emerging needs borne of this disaster. Addressing the needs of the survivors -- families of the victims, including those rescue workers who lost their lives in their efforts to assist, is our highest priority.

Your contribution will be going to this effort which has become known as the Liberty Fund. Your heartfelt support enables us to keep a longstanding promise that America depends on greatly. Thank you to all of the members of the Department for such a generous gift.

Robert A. Healy  
Director, Major Gifts



## BRIDGE MAINTENANCE GIVES NEW LIFE TO BUILT-TO-LAST STONE BRIDGE *North Branch Bridge is One of Five Stone Arch Bridges in Hillsborough*

Stone arch bridges were popular to build in New Hampshire during the mid-19th century. They were guaranteed to last a lot longer than wooden bridges that were soon affected by moisture. And many stone bridges have withstood the test of time.

"New Hampshire probably has the largest concentration of stone arch bridges in New England," Jim Garvin, of the State Division of Historic Resources told the *Concord Monitor*.

There may be as many as 50 stone arch bridges still standing in New Hampshire. Their unique characteristic is that dry masonry construction depends on gravity to keep the stones in place.

Here was the challenge to Bridge Maintenance Crew #7 with the North Branch stone arch bridge: restore the structural integrity of the 150-year old bridge without deviating too much from its historical origin while keeping in mind the demands of 21st Century traffic. The most obvious problem was the southeast arch of the bridge had failed and was dipping about two feet. The crew began by peeling everything off both arches and stripping all the stone.

"When we opened it up, we felt we could jack it back into shape," says crew superintendent Denny Hisler. "We designed a jacking system to jack portions of the bridge back into shape and it worked."

But the jacking and rebuilding process took a lot of time. There was a lot of stone cutting to be done and a cutting work area was set up in a nearby field. While the tools have improved, the time consuming process still involved drilling holes in granite and tapping it until it broke into its desired shape. The high quality granite came from a railroad bridge in Greenland (District 6).

The Bureau of Municipal Highways had consultants design the project. However, many field changes were necessary due to unanticipated factors and the project was essentially a redesign-build in the field where many challenges and



**Labor intensive stone cutting utilized modern tools to cut and shape the large granite blocks.**

solutions don't arise until you take the bridge apart, thus requiring flexibility by the crew. For example, it was found that the bridge had spread laterally and had to be pulled back together.

"They've been enthusiastic and learned a lot," says Bridge Maintenance Administrator Ed Welch. "All the guys contributed to the ideas."

"I'm fortunate to have a real talented crew," Hisler says. "They have great attitudes and got right into the job. It was a total group effort."

In addition to Hisler, Bridge Maintenance crew members working on the project included Harold Wilson (Supervisor), Fred Swett, Doug Haskins, Walt Young, David Parker and John Leonard (Bridge Maintainers). Also contributing to the project were Kevin Nyhan (Environment) and Municipal Highways which administered the funding of the estimated \$800,000 project (80% state - 20% town).

The finished product raised the road by about three feet for improved drainage and safety. A concrete slab was poured under the pavement to better distribute weight loads. Weathered aluminum rail replaced a less safe cable rail. Excavation of the brook bed and the adding of more than 1000 yards of stone increased the water flow capability and reduced the possibility of washouts and erosion. (Final project costs by Bridge Maintenance will be about \$400,000)

"I am real impressed with the end result. They can have good reason to be proud of their work," Ed Welch says. "The town is elated," Denny Hisler says. "They couldn't be happier."



**This is how the Hillsborough stone arch bridge looked early in the rebuilding process. When completed, the bridge road bed was raised about three feet to improve drainage and safety.**

## NEW REGIONAL BIKE MAPS SHOULD PROVE POPULAR WITH CYCLISTS

The initial project to assist bicyclists was to put together a state map showing the potential bike route links between populations centers across New Hampshire.

But the ultimate goal was to produce regional bike maps which would offer a more detailed outline for trip planning.

That goal is about to become a reality as the Bureau of Transportation Planning puts the finishing touches on a total of eight regional bike maps that should be ready for wide-spread distribution by the spring of 2002.

"It's sort of like comparing the Interstate system to local roads," says NHDOT Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator Thomas Jameson. "By making the scope of the map easier to read, we have made it easier to go from one town to another by bicycle."

The new regional bike maps evolved from a partnership between the NHDOT, bicycle advocates, Regional Planning Commissions and the Bicycle/Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Board. Input was obtained at a series of regional meetings and the NHDOT's annual Bicycle/Pedestrian Conference.

Also being considered are mini-maps of the same routes that would be appealing to cyclists who have few pockets for storage.



Thomas Jameson (left) and Louis Barker of Transportation Planning display one of the eight regional bicycle maps that will be ready for distribution this coming spring. The regional bike maps will be available at welcome centers and rest areas across the state and through the NHDOT's Bureau of Transportation Planning at 271-3344.

## Cooperative Effort Stabilizes Connecticut River Bank Near Rail Line In Stratford



The quick response to stabilize a Connecticut River bank was organized by District 1. The Bureau of Rail and Transit secured funding for the project. According to District 1 Assistant Engineer Dick Morneau, "the cooperative effort that included input and support from NHDOT, NHDES, USDA Conservation Service, Connecticut River Joint Commissions and Winterset Construction shows what working together can accomplish."

It was a problem that needed quick attention. Erosion of a bank along the Connecticut River in Stratford was threatening a nearby state-owned rail line used by the NH Central Railroad line to transport fuel oil. Recognizing both safety and environmental concerns, the NHDOT's Rail and Transit Bureau joined with District 1 forces, other state and federal agencies and a local contractor to successfully stabilize the river bank.





## STATE FAIR VISITORS CONTINUE TO GIVE THE NHDOT HIGH MARKS

### *Fifth Annual Survey Adds Question On Dealing With Congestion*

For the fifth straight year the numbers haven't changed much. And that's a good thing.

More than 95% of those responding to surveys distributed at five state fairs this year have a favorable impression of the New Hampshire Department of Transportation.

Fairgoers have completed nearly 9,000 survey forms in the past five years and the numbers have remained quite constant, according to Highway Maintenance Administrator Steve Gray, who came up with the idea of NHDOT information booths at the state fairs.

"There is a clear message that the public's main concern is the condition of the roadway surface," Gray reports. "They would like it to be smooth (good pavement) and free of snow and ice. Additionally, they are very concerned with the inspecting and repairing of bridges."



There were some minor differences in the answers provided at the Cheshire, Hopkinton, Lancaster, North Haverhill and Deerfield Fairs that appear to be geographical in nature.

For example, Steve Gray says, snow and ice control appears to be more important in the northern part of the state than in the south.

A new question added to the unscientific survey this year deals with the issue of traffic congestion - "What method would you favor to manage congestion on NH Highways?" Respondents could choose from building new roads, adding lanes to existing roads, expanding mass transit or doing nothing.

According to Steve Gray, the results for the new question are also quite consistent, with the overwhelming majority of respondents selecting additional lanes to existing roads as the preferred method. The results appear to indicate that the construction of new roads has greater acceptance in more rural areas.

### *The Customers have their say....*

**Editor's Note:** In his annual compilation of the state fair survey results, Barry Curren (District 2) also lists unedited comments that fairgoers added to the surveys. Here's what some of them had on their minds.

I've noticed a lot of signs reminding motorists to slow down through construction zones. This is a great idea!

I live in Mass. but travel a lot in NH. Every time I come back to Mass. I know I'm there. Bumpety bump!

We need a whole lot more passenger railroads all over the state! Highways only is crazy.

We have lived in NH for 10 years and the roads are well taken care of. Winter maintenance excellent! Thank You!

More roads need new bases before repaving. Tear up. Start new. Stop wasting money on small layers of pavement.

Would like better reflective striping for visibility in rainstorms. Reflective paint is near totally ineffective when wet.

Consider using highway side mowing of grass to make hay to be sold for livestock or mulch straw.

Expand mass transit -- but I'd like to keep my house near Exit 2 in Nashua! (Nashua-Lowell commuter rail)

I believe that you should use prisoners to do maintenance and pick up trash on the highways and roads.

The best state I've travelled in so far at signing construction sites, safety on those sites and allowing traffic flow.

Make filling cracks in roads a top priority. Fill potholes with material more permanent than coal patch.

Continue researching other means than salt of dealing with ice that won't damage soil, cars, trucks, roadways, etc.

Build quality bike trails. Consider roundabouts for the Keene area.

## Seabrook Welcome Center Supervisor Receives Granite State Ambassador Award

*Betty Gagne Recognized for Promoting New Hampshire at Northbound Interstate 95 Rest Area*

Whether it's toll booth attendants, welcome center employees or snowplow drivers, it's often been said that the first people encountered by visitors to New Hampshire work for the State Department of Transportation.

One of those NHDOT employees consistently making a positive impression is Betty Gagne, Supervisor of the Seabrook Welcome Center on Interstate 95. Gagne was one of five recipients of the Granite State Ambassadors (GSA) Managers Award, presented at the organization's annual Awards Banquet on September 21.

"Even though Betty is a DOT employee, she's also a Granite State Ambassador and she's always ready to help me when I need it," said Linda Messer, GSA Volunteer Manager for the Seacoast. It was Messer who selected Betty Gagne for the managers' award, based on her helpfulness and support for the program and the welcome center.

The Granite State Ambassadors are a group of people who are trained and certified in New Hampshire information. They volunteer in various locations throughout the state, including Manchester Airport, the Pease International Tradeport, area Chambers of Commerce, and several New Hampshire Welcome Centers and Rest Areas.

In addition to her welcome center duties, Betty



NHDOT Turnpikes Bureau Administrator Harvey Goodwin (left) joined Hampton Area Chamber of Commerce President B.J. "Doc" Noel in congratulating Betty Gagne for her Granite State Ambassadors Manager Award.

Gagne volunteered time this past summer at the Hampton Beach Visitors Center, which she said was "a very enjoyable and awakening experience for me."

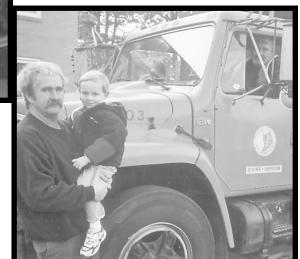
"I never realized how many people come to Hampton Beach during the summer. It's also a beautiful spot. You get caught up in it - the people, the concerts and all the events. It was a great way to spend volunteer hours," Gagne says.

For information about training and volunteer opportunities, check out the Granite State Ambassadors website at [www.nhgsa.com](http://www.nhgsa.com).

## Pre-schoolers Get Up Close and Personal With NHDOT Plow Trucks

It's one thing to see those big orange state plow trucks go by your house in a snowstorm, but quite another to climb behind the wheel and maybe even blow the horn. That was a welcome opportunity given to some four-year olds at the IHM Preschool in Concord when NHDOT employees from District 3's 316 patrol facility in Loudon stopped by on November 28 to pay a visit.

Joining Patrol Foreman Tim Landry in meeting with the preschoolers were Larry LeRoux, Bliss Magoon and Joe McDonald (315 shed). A few phone calls made the visit possible after Tim's nephew, 4-year old Jacob Holton, (right photo with Tim) told his classmates that his uncle drove a big plow truck and keeps the snow off the roads.





### NEW HIRES

**Thaddeus Salach**, Highway Maintainer 1, District 5  
**Patrick Doughty**, Highway Maintainer 2, District 1  
**Charles Mackein**, Civil Engineer 1, Highway Design  
**Mathew Bouchard**, Highway Maintainer 1, Turnpikes  
**Dennis Meuse III**, Highway Maintainer 2, Turnpikes  
**Ivan Skinner**, Toll Attendant 1, Turnpikes  
**Timothy Parenteau**, Highway Maintainer 2, District 2  
**David Mansur**, Highway Maintainer 1, District 5  
**Douglas Beech**, Heavy Equipment Mechanic, Turnpikes  
**Raymond Castor**, Highway Maintainer 2, District 4  
**Benjamin Gelinis**, Trades Helper, Mechanical Services  
**Jessica Dzbynski**, Gate Operator, Bridge Maintenance  
**Raymond Grogan**, Bridge Maintainer 2, Bridge Maintenance  
**Michael Heath**, Concrete Plant Inspector, Materials & Res.  
**Bryan Tuthill**, Highway Maintainer 2, District 4  
**David Chandler**, Supervisor 4, Human Resources  
**Laurie Minichiello**, Human Resources Tech., Human Res.

**Kenneth Johnson**, Highway Maintainer 1, Turnpikes  
**Richard Smith**, Highway Maintainer 2, District 1  
**Phillip Schoenheit**, Highway Maintainer 1, Turnpikes  
**Clarence Dingman**, Highway Maintainer 2, District 1  
**Douglas Potter**, Program Specialist 1, Human Resources  
**Wayne Pearson, Jr.**, Highway Maintainer 2, District 2  
**Richard Doyle**, Highway Maintainer 2, District 6  
**Todd Dunham**, Highway Maintainer 2, District 2  
**Beshu Rana**, Systems Development Specialist 3, ITS  
**Luke Smith**, Electronic Technician 2, Aeronautics  
**John Sargent**, Civil Engineer 2, Bridge Design  
**Andrew Rosen**, Highway Maintainer 1, District 2  
**Edward Dean**, Bridge Maintainer 1, Bridge Maintenance  
**Dana Clark**, Highway Maintainer 2, District 6  
**Susan Bridge**, Secretary 2, Right-of-Way  
**Audrey Moore**, Toll Attendant 1, Turnpikes  
**Doug Potter**, Compliance Review Officer, Human Resources

### PROMOTIONS

**Steven King**, Highway Patrol Foreman, District 2  
**James Judd**, Assistant Highway Patrol Foreman, District 2  
**Margaret Smith**, Highway Patrol Foreman, District 5  
**David LaBrecque**, Highway Maintainer 3, District 1  
**Charles Provencal**, Pavement Marking Supervisor, Traffic  
**Doug Gosling**, Senior Engineer, Bridge Maintenance  
**Guy Giunta**, Roadside Design Supervisor, Highway Design  
**Kevin Nyhan**, Environmentalist 3, Environment  
**Ninder Singh**, Internal EEO Coordinator, Human Resources  
**Doug King**, Assistant District Engineer, District 2  
**Bill Cass**, Chief Project Manager, Highway Design  
**Kyle Fox**, Maintenance & Construction Engineer, Bridge Main.  
**Susan Quigley**, Program Specialist 1, Human Resources



The "stockings" were hung from the balcony with care at District 2's #212 patrol facility in Cornish where Patrol Foreman Julie Van de Bogart and crew took some time to celebrate the Christmas holiday season. No word on whether Santa filled them up with goodies.

### RETIREMENTS (years of service)

**Larry Tirrell**, Highway Maintainer 2, District 5 (14)  
**Jeannette S. Perrin**, Information Center Attendant, Turnpikes (12)  
**Stephen J. Hunt**, Highway Maintainer 2, District 1 (15)  
**James R. Burney**, Engineering Technician 4, Construction (17)  
**Bruce J. Todd**, Highway Maintainer 2, District 4 (30)  
**Dan H. Williams**, Maintenance Supervisor, District 2 (26)  
**Alvin G. Derrington**, Highway Maintainer 2, District 1 (30)  
**Alfred L. Aldrich**, Highway Maintainer 3B, District 4 (4)  
**George Cote**, Highway Patrol Foreman, District 2 (17)  
**Raymond Gauthier**, Toll Attendant 1, Turnpikes  
**James Colbert**, Toll Attendant 2, Turnpikes (10) (effective 2/1/02)  
**Judith Demos**, Toll Attendant 2, Turnpikes (10) (effective 2/1/02)





# SERVICE AWARDS



*December 2001 through February 2002*

## 30 YEARS

**Maureen Arsenault**, Human Resources  
**Francis LaPoint**, Construction  
**Paul Keddy**, District 5

## 25 YEARS

**Robert Reinhard**, District 1  
**Ronald Deshaies**, Turnpikes  
**Michael Hazlett**, Highway Design

## 20 YEARS

**Gary Kitson**, Bridge Maintenance  
**Tony Albert**, District 2  
**Carroll Thompson, Jr.**, District 2  
**Jean Blais**, District 6

## 15 YEARS

**Philip Huntley**, Highway Maintenance  
**Douglas Stenberg**, Mechanical Services  
**Russell Pilotte**, District 1  
**Harry Walker**, District 5  
**Cary Wetherbee**, District 2  
**Subramanian Nsharma**, Planning  
**Joseph Adams, Jr.**, Bridge Design  
**Jeffrey Lewis**, Turnpikes  
**Douglas Noyes**, District 3  
**Fred Drew**, District 3  
**Lucille Howard**, Finance & Contracts  
**Barbara Mapes**, Rail and Transit  
**James Rostron, Jr.**, District 2  
**William Spencer**, District 6  
**Ralph Lyford II**, District 3  
**Matthew Smith**, District 3  
**Christopher Hobbs**, District 2  
**Melvin Rocke**, District 2  
**Gerald Morse**, District 2  
**Matthew Ray**, District 3  
**Richard Patten, Jr.**, District 4

## 10 YEARS

**Linda Smith**, Right-of-Way  
**Paul Robichaud**, District 4  
**Laurence Coakley**, Turnpikes  
**Jerry Martin**, Mechanical Services  
**James Colbert**, Turnpikes  
**Roger Biron**, Mechanical Services  
**Leslie Silver**, District 5  
**Denis Neveu**, Turnpikes  
**Judith Demos**, Turnpikes  
**William Janelle**, Right-of-Way  
**Dallas Patten**, Highway Design  
**Julie Mathews**, ITS  
**Raymond Gauthier**, Turnpikes  
**Maurice Desaindes**, Mechanical Services  
**Rex Caulder**, Bridge Maintenance  
**Hue Wetherbee**, District 2  
**Ruth Godfrey**, District 5  
**Sandra Dozier**, Turnpikes  
**George Lathrop**, District 4

## *300 Years of State Service*



Nine NHDOT employees were recently recognized by Governor Shaheen for a total of 300 years of state service! They include: (left to right) **Richard F. Antonia** (Engineering Audit - 35), **Janice Curtis** (Audit - 35 yrs.), **James Olmstead, Jr.** (District 4 - 30), **Brian MacLean**, Construction - 30), **Gov. Shaheen**, **Jesse Dennis** (Construction - 40), **Kenneth Loomis** (Survey - 35), **Dana Abbott** (Public Works - 30) and **James Whipple** (District 5 - 35)

**SWANZEY CELEBRATES NEW COVERED BRIDGE OVER THE ASHUELOT RIVER**  
*"The Slate Covered Bridge" is the Fifth Longest Single Span Covered Bridge in the State*



The above photo shows the installation of the first Town Lattice Truss on June 18, 2001. The below photo was taken at opening ceremonies for the state's newest covered bridge on October 6.

The citizens of Swanzey, New Hampshire are celebrating the opening of the State's newest covered bridge named The Slate Covered Bridge.

The attractive new covered bridge is located over the Ashuelot River and replaces a covered bridge that was destroyed by arson in 1993. This 143 foot-long single lane bridge is the fifth longest single span covered bridge in New Hampshire.

This bridge was designed and constructed using a Town Lattice Truss. Timber members are held together using wooden trunnels (tree-nails). Over 1,700 trunnels were used in construction of the bridge. The bridge weighs more than 70 tons and the roof system was designed to support up to 45 tons of snow.

NHDOT District Four Engineer Doug Graham represented the Department at the October 6, 2001 opening ceremonies.

The project was funded 80% through the Bureau of Municipal Highways, Bridge Aid Fund. The town's 20% share was raised entirely through fundraising. Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, Inc. of Manchester, NH was the design and construction administration consultant. Wright Construction of Mt. Holley, VT was the prime contractor.

**New NH Route 108 Bridge Linking Stratham and Newfields Replaces "The Singing Bridge"**

A modern three-span bridge is now carrying traffic between Stratham and Newfields on Route 108 over the Squamscott River. The 435-foot long concrete deck bridge is wider (two 12-foot lanes and 4-foot shoulders) than the old bridge and has about 7 feet more clearance.

The old bridge, built in 1925, was on the state's "Red List" and will be torn down next year.

Once referred to as the "swinging bridge", because operators would swing it open to let boats pass under, it was better known in recent years as "the singing bridge" due to the noise made by vehicles traveling over its metal grating.

Denis Switzer was the Construction Bureau's Contract Administrator for the \$5 million project, which also included the relocation and signalization of the Route 108 intersection with NH Route 85. Bridge Design personnel working on the project included Dave Scott, Gary Clark, Pete Parenteau, Terry Place, Sue Guptill and Bob Aubrey.



A Model A Ford driven by nearby resident Richard Ramsdell marked the opening of the new NH 108 bridge over the Squamscott River on November 15. R.S. Audley Construction of Bow, NH was the general contractor of the \$5 million project.

## NHDOT SUPPORTS NEW HAMPSHIRE CLEAN CAR LABELING PROGRAM

### *Vehicles Getting 30 MPG or Greater Get Clean Car Label at Auto Dealerships*

The NH Department of Transportation is joining with a coalition of groups to introduce a new labeling program aimed at making it easier for consumers to identify less polluting, more fuel efficient new vehicles sold at New Hampshire dealerships.

The "Granite State Clean Cars" program asks New Hampshire dealers to voluntarily cite new vehicles that meet certain criteria for emissions levels and fuel economy with a unique "Clean Cars" label designed specifically for the program. Any 2001 or new model year vehicle with a highway fuel economy of 30 miles per gallon or greater with designated low emissions ratings is eligible to receive the label.

Since the 1970's, the automobile industry has made great progress in reducing vehicle emissions. But this country continues to face environmental and public health challenges as the demand for personal transportation increases.

In New Hampshire, cars and trucks are still

a significant source of emissions that contribute to ozone pollution, air toxics and global warming.

Fortunately, new vehicles that have lower emissions and get better fuel economy are becoming more available. However, the public often can't compare emissions levels from one vehicle to another.

The "Clean Cars" labeling program identifies and distinguishes cleaner vehicles on dealer lots. Those participating dealers will be encouraged to advertise and promote themselves as "Clean Car" dealers.

The NHDOT is joining the following groups in introducing the new program: the NH Department of Environmental Services, the NH Automobile Dealers Association, the American Lung Association of New Hampshire and the Appalachian Mountain Club.

Program materials include labels, a list of qualifying new vehicles, consumer friendly literature, and a participation certificate to display in showrooms.



## Maintenance Districts Using New Rubber Wheeled Excavators For Wide Range of Tasks



All six NHDOT maintenance districts each now have a new piece of equipment to help them with a wide range of roadside tasks. Through a first-time lease arrangement, Caterpillar rubber-wheeled excavators are being used to clear ditches, remove brush, lay pipe, construct shoulders and clean sediment basins. Operations Director Lyle "Butch" Knowlton says the new equipment will make these tasks much more environmentally responsible and efficient, and less labor intensive than in the past.

The far-reaching boom of the M318 excavator can be fitted with two different size buckets or a "brontosaurus mower head", depending on the roadside project.

## Public Works Contributes to New District 6 Patrol Facility in Exeter For Maintenance of Newly Built Section of NH Route 101

It's hard not to notice the new District 6 #607 patrol facility near Exit 9 in Exeter on the newly widened Route 101. Looming nearby is a massive new salt shed that can house 3,500 tons of salt for winter maintenance operations.

The 7,000 square foot wood-framed garage and fueling station was designed in-house by the Public Works Bureau:  
*Project Manager/Structural design* - Michelle Juliano  
*Architect* - Rob Smith      *Civil design* - RJ Sparks  
*Mechanical design* - Dave Goulet  
*Electrical design* - Chris Sheehan  
*Architectural design & drafting* - Jim Haggett  
*Clerk of the Works* - Scott Lebrun



#607 Patrol Foreman Dennis Tuttle shows Public Works Director Jim Marshall around the new Exeter patrol facility.



## WHIPPING INTO SHAPE FOR WINTER MAINTENANCE IN DISTRICT 1 *Tradition Continues of Using 12-foot Sticks to Mark Obstacles for Snowplows*

*Editor's Note: The following article written by New Hampshire Sunday News correspondent Lorna Colquhoun appeared in the November 11, 2001 edition of the paper. It is being reprinted with permission.*

WOODSTOCK, NH -- Peas have their season. So do broccoli, zucchini and onions.

After each interminable winter, gardeners consult their almanacs to find the best days for planting in May or June and a few months later they harvest their bounty.

In North Woodstock the other day, Alvin Lee and Ray Mulleavey were in the midst of a planting season peculiar to the North Country. It has no reference in any farmers' almanac, but it's best to get these 12-foot tall sticks into the ground before freezing.

Welcome to Whip Season, another harbinger to winter here in the north, sort of the autumn equivalent of mud season.

"It's coming," Lee said, jamming a heavy metal rod into the ground next to a newspaper tube, inserting a tall, slender wooden pole and tamping it.

Lee and his partner, Ray Mulleavey, work for the Department of Transportation and they were cruising the neighborhoods of North Woodstock Thursday, planting scores of whips next to mailboxes, newspaper tubes and fence posts. Their bright orange plow truck returned a splash of bright color to a lackluster landscape.

"They're used to delineate a post and other things alongside the road, so we don't ruin them when the snow gets deep," explained Greg Placy, the engineer for the DOT in Lancaster, whose sweeping district covers Coos County and the northern part of Grafton County.

As far as he knows, no other DOT district in the state puts out whips. No one knows why these poles are called whips, but Placy said it has been a timeless tradition to put them out in the waning days of fall.

"We put out somewhere around 4,000 of them every year," he said.

A lion's share is used on the Kancamagus Highway, where the snow can get deep enough, especially at the highest elevation, that plow drivers can lose sight of the guardrails and signs. The 12-foot whips can keep them on the straight and narrow on snowy days.

The whips are cut during the summer, Placy said, after permission is obtained from landowners to cut the slender saplings. They are piled up during the summer and then distributed among DOT crews, which pile them in the back of their plow trucks for planting in between the early snows.

Come April or May, when the last snowbanks have melted and the once-frozen ground relinquishes them, the crews return to harvest this particular crop. The whips are retired to the woods from which they came and fresh ones will be cut again next summer.



**District 1 Highway Maintainer Alvin Lee plants a "whip" in North Woodstock in early November. District 1 Engineer Greg Placy estimates about 4,000 whips are put in place annually to alert snowplow drivers to such obstacles as mailboxes and fences. It has been a timeless tradition in the North Country to put out the whips in the waning days of fall. (photo credit - Lorna Colquhoun)**



## TRAFFIC BUREAU CREW HELPS BRING CHRISTMAS TO THE STATEHOUSE PLAZA *SIGN FOREMAN RICK MOODY HAS HELPED WITH ANNUAL YULE TIME TRADITION FOR 15 YEARS*

Rick Moody's biggest fear every year is that the lights on the State House plaza Christmas tree won't illuminate when he flicks the switch. For the most part, he has avoided that embarrassment. But that's only a small part of the effort put forth by the heavy sign maintenance foreman and other employees of the NHDOT's Traffic Bureau every year when they are called upon to help choose, cut, transport, position and decorate the high profile Christmas tree.

This year's 34-year old tree (40 feet tall and 22 feet wide) came from the corner of Manor and Fisherville Roads in Penacook. Most of the trees are donated by Concord area residents looking to have them removed from their properties.

It's a two day effort, with the first day dedicated to cutting, moving and setting up the tree. The 800 lights and star are added on the second day.

For Rick Moody (pictured below center), it's been a labor of love for the past 15 years. Helping with the operation this year were fellow Traffic Bureau employees Alan Turcotte, Dennis L'Heureux and Robert Hyslop, and a City of Concord tree crew.



## Operation Santa Claus Once Again Comes Through For New Hampshire Kids

Operation Santa Claus was (once again) a great success this year. The NHDOT sponsored over 250 children and over 3,000 children statewide were served by the state employee-supported program.

We want to send out a "Thank You" to all who sponsored a child, and to those who gave that extra special effort with helping everything run smoothly.

We look forward to working with everyone again next year, and hope that we have just as much success (or even more)! Thank You!

Wendy Webb (Highway Design)  
Jenni Woodworth (Highway Design)



Volunteers help load a NHDOT plow truck with gifts headed for Operation Santa Claus headquarters, and eventually needy kids.



## In The News.....



### 40-Hour Week Offered to Engineers and Technicians To Address "Crisis" in Hiring and Retention

Citing an ongoing and worsening problem of hiring and retaining Civil Engineers and Engineering Technicians at the NHDOT, Commissioner Carol Murray is proposing changing the work week of those positions from 37.5 to 40 hours to increase the income of those jobs.

Commissioner Murray and Assistant Commissioner Gil Rogers met with interested employees and representatives of the State Employee Association on December 7 to discuss the proposal and answer questions.

Bob Greer, Director of Project Development, said the vacancy rate for positions has more than doubled in the past three years to about 60 engineering and technician positions and recruitment efforts have proven futile.

The cost to implement the 40 work week is estimated at \$1 million, which could be covered by the \$3 million the NHDOT currently lapses each year due to unfilled positions. The proposal must be approved by SEA union members within the NHDOT.



NHDOT engineers and technicians attended a December 7 meeting with Commissioner Carol Murray to learn more about her proposal to extend their work week from 37.5 hours to 40 hours.

### Four NHDOT Employees Named "Roads Scholars"

The Road Scholar Program at the University of New Hampshire's Technology Transfer Center has recognized four NHDOT employees for completion of course work on subjects essential to road management.

Scott Clarke (Turnpikes) received the Senior Road Scholar award, the third of four levels of achievement, for completing 70 hours of instruction in the program.

Ken Louzier (District 2), Mike Reifke (District 5) and Ralph Sanders (District 5) all received Road Scholar One awards for completing 30 hours of instruction in the program.

## On the Move

### Dover Toll Taker Dragged By Non-Paying Customer

Frank Grant was determined to collect the full toll. As a result, he narrowly escaped serious injury.

The 62-year old toll attendant was working a north-bound lane at the Dover tolls on the Spaulding Turnpike on December 21 when an uncooperative motorist paid him a partial toll of 26 cents. Grant yelled at the male motorist in a light-colored Volvo and he stopped. As Grant reached in the car to receive more money, the driver rolled up the window before Grant could remove his arm.

As the motorist drove away, Grant ran alongside the vehicle for about 30 feet until he was able to free his arm from the window and fall to the ground. Even though he suffered a head wound that required several staples to close, Frank Grant was on the job three days later working his regular shift.

Police were not able to track down the toll scofflaw.

### UDOT Gearing Up For The Winter Olympics

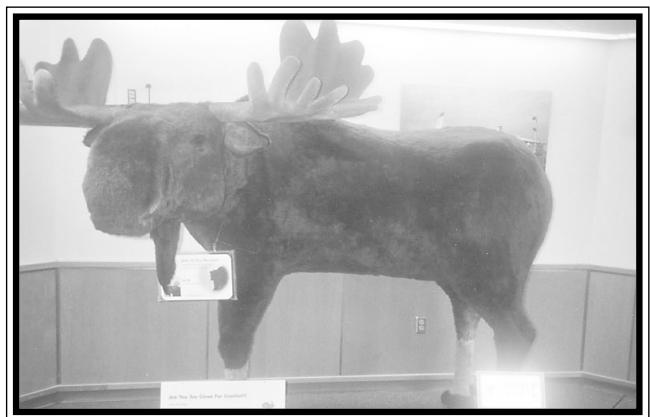
Like their New Hampshire counterparts, employees of the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) are doing what they can to keep the roads clear for visiting skiers.

But the folks in Utah also have bobsledders, ski jumpers and lugers to accommodate, along with thousands of other athletes, spectators and media descending on the Salt Lake City area for the 2002 Winter Olympic Games this February.

An \$80 million state-of-the-art Traffic Operations Center (TOC) is at the heart of a intelligent transportation system aimed at keeping traffic flowing smoothly.

Check out UDOT efforts for the 2002 Winter Olympics on the Internet at [www.commuterlink.utah.gov](http://www.commuterlink.utah.gov).

### Moose Photo: Part 2



Don't expect moose photos to become a regular feature in *On the Move*, but we had to share "Max the Moose" with those who haven't visited the new Morton Building Lobby lately. Max is on loan from the Department of Resources and Economic Development while the agency has some work done on its lobby. The life-size stuffed animal was built at a cost of \$5,000 by a company in Washington state. Max, the goodwill ambassador, came fully assembled, except for his antlers, which had to be screwed into place.



## LETTERS



November 21, 2001

Dear Commissioner Murray,

*I am writing to express my gratitude to one of your employees who offered me crucial help on November 20.*

*A tire on my car blew out as I was driving north on I-93 and by great good luck I pulled off the road beside one of your vans, driven by Richard Daughen and Mike Curley. I did not have a cell phone and Richard Daughen made a series of calls until he located an available tow truck. They did not leave until I was quite certain of getting assistance. I don't know how long I might have been there otherwise before getting help and it would have been a time of considerable anxiety.*

*I want therefore to express my gratitude in the hope that it may be taken into future consideration of any future evaluation of the work of Mr. Daughen and indeed of Mr. Curley as well.*

*Yesterday they did wonders for public relations.*

*Myra Jehlen  
Rutgers University*

**Editor's Note:** Richard Daughen and Mike Curley work for the Bureau of Transportation Planning.

October 15, 2001

The Canada-U.S. AIDS Vaccine Ride would like to thank you for your exceptional kindness in the State of New Hampshire.

The support and assistance from the New Hampshire Department of Transportation not only provided participants with wonderful memories of the ride, but also helped us enforce safety as our highest priority.

Glen Fillmore and Chris Velte  
AIDS Vaccine Ride Coordinators



## On the Move



State of New Hampshire  
House of Representatives

October 15, 2001

Dear Commissioner Murray:

Recently, after returning from a five week vacation, I had the opportunity to travel on the "new" Route 116 in North Haverhill. I want to commend you, your office, and the local district office of the Dept. of Transportation for the outstanding work and beautiful presentation of Sanborn St. in North Haverhill.

I realize there were some difficult tasks presented to your department, not only with the local inhabitants, but (also) the actual road construction. However, through it all the newly constructed road shows the expertise and patience of your managers and workers.

A job well done.

John S. Cobb, NH Representative  
Haverhill, Orford and Piermont

**Editor's Note:** The following letter was written to Highway Maintenance District 2 Engineer Alan Hanscom. Wayne Brown works at the Lebanon Welcome Center.

We were vacationing in your area and as we were coming into the rest area in Lebanon we had a flat tire.

Mr. Wayne Brown of your staff went beyond the call of duty in assisting us. It was about closing time and raining. He came out and helped us unload the trunk and change the tire.

Mr. Brown not only helped us, but also made sure we knew where to get our tire fixed, gave us some helpful advice on accommodations and offered several recommendations on places to eat.

This was the first visit to your state, and if all your associates are as dedicated to helping your visitors, you have a staff to be proud of.

Thomas H. & Rhonda Newman  
Smyrna, Georgia



## NHDOT People

### Agency Staff Auditor Janice Curtis Retires After More than 35 Years of State Service

Janice Curtis spent a lot of time working with numbers at the NHDOT, putting in nearly 13 years as a staff auditor for the agency. Previous stints of 17 years at Administrative Services, five years at Public Health and six months at Employment Security all added up to retirement time for the Concord resident.

"Janice has been both an excellent auditor and a very good co-worker," said Audit Manager Doug Rowden who shared an office with Janice during her DOT years.

Several employees stopped by a reception in Janice's honor on November 29th to wish her well.

"I just think people in this Department are wonderful...warm, friendly and nice to work with," Janice said. "I will miss them."



Doug Rowden and retiring co-worker Janice Curtis pose together on her last day of work after nearly 13 years in the Audit Office.

### Baby News!

Thomas Jameson (Transportation Planning) and his wife Tammy have a new addition to their family. Katherine Athena Jameson - 7 lbs., 6 oz. - 19 1/2 inches - born on December 7. Katherine has two older brothers, Angus and Luke, who will take good care of her.



A large group of co-workers, family and friends gathered on December 9 at District One's #116 patrol facility in Franconia to extend best wishes to longtime Highway Maintainer Alvin Derrington upon his retirement.

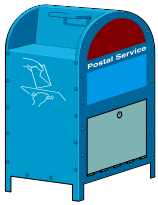
Following a spaghetti dinner and cake, Alvin was recognized for his 30 years of service by Commissioner Carol Murray. His co-workers also presented Alvin with an embroidered jacket as a parting gift. Pictured with Alvin (front row next to Commissioner Murray) are fellow NHDOT retirees (front row left to right) Dick Thompson, Sherm Holmes and Larry Elliot. Back Row (left to right) Bob Chase, Bob Gooden, Malcolm Clough, Spencer Tewksbury, Bob Richards, Gene Superchi, and Don Pierce.



John Hunt (Bridge Maintenance) was recognized at the December major staff meeting for 25 years of state service.

Commissioner Murray recently congratulated George Thompson (District 1) for 25 years of state service. George worked for 21 years at Cannon Mountain.





## More Letters



ATTORNEY GENERAL  
STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

October 19, 2001

I write to express my appreciation for the assistance the Department of Transportation provided to the Attorney General's Office in researching the State's title to the Youth Development Center property in Manchester.

Keith Lemire, Chief Engineering Technician, and Abstractor Jennifer Lapointe have provided me with the comprehensive title information that I requested. Ms. Lapointe's abstract of title and her oral presentation of results at our meeting were remarkably thorough and professional. She and Mr. Lemire are a credit to the Department of Transportation.

Michael J. Walls  
Associate Attorney General

# On the Move

October 6, 2001

*Your department has been working since June repairing the old stone bridge requiring our neighborhood to make a three mile detour to go any place. Despite this inconvenience, my neighbors and I have been delighted with the steady pace of work, the skilled craftsmanship and the pleasant cooperation that the crew has displayed at all times.*

*I believe this is directly the result of the imaginative leadership of the foreman on the job, Dennis Hisler. He has clearly given the entire crew a caring regard for their work and brought an interest to the job well beyond what anyone would expect. The original design of the repair would have been a monstrous deformation of this lovely bridge which dates back to the 1850's. He called the design to the attention of the Selectmen (and) offered a greatly improved design. We had a public meeting on the site, and by poll, unanimously went with his improved design to the delight of the neighborhood.*

*What a pleasure in an era when government is publicly damned out of hand, to find it working to the highest ideal.*

*You and Mr. Hisler are to be complimented and thanked for the excellent job. We look forward to its completion and many years of use of this old bridge.*

Joseph L. Solomon  
Hillsboro, NH

*Editor's note: See photos and story on pages 1 and 4.*

**October 12, 2001**

**To whom it may concern:**

**Today I was driving home on Route 3 and took Exit 12. While stopping to pay the toll, my car overheated and broke down.**

**I was with my 10-month old daughter and a little stressed. Your toll workers, Karen Molan and Pat Platt, were so helpful. (They) helped me with my car and were very friendly.**

**I just wanted to send a little thank you note for them. Please let them know how thankful I am.**

**Joanna Frechette**

December 12, 2001

Anyone from NH who has traveled in other states and experienced their toll booth attendants has experienced some pretty surly, rude or simply un-responsive people.

Not so in New Hampshire.

I have yet to find a NH toll booth attendant who did not meet me with a hello and a thank you. Every time I pass through a NH toll booth I thought I should say something about this because I imagine a lot of messages about toll booths are probably not positive.

Anyway, I hope this message can somehow me passed along to all the unnamed individuals who do this job.

Dave Nelson  
Wilton, NH



## Taking a Closer Look at "IT"

### *Some Say New Hampshire Inventor's Segway Human Transporter Will Revolutionize Transportation*

Nearly a year of intense national curiosity, hype and speculation about what Manchester inventor Dean Kamen had up his sleeve that would "revolutionize" transportation finally culminated with the debut in early December of the "Segway Human Transporter".

The mystery machine known previously as 'It' was billed as "...the world's first self-balancing human transporter," by Kamen when the Segway was unveiled on ABC's *Good Morning America*. "You stand on this Segway Human Transporter and you think forward and then you go forward. If you think backward, you go backward," Kamen said.

Whether the Segway will change transportation and even the face of inner cities in America remains to be seen. Skeptics are calling it an "expensive toy". The Segway will be available to the public in about a year with a \$3,000 pricetag.

The 65-pound device looks like little more than a two-wheeled scooter, but its complex inner workings include tilt sensors that monitor the rider's center of gravity more than 100 times a second. Kamen says the Segway can go 12 miles an hour for up to 15 miles on a six-hour charge from a standard outlet.

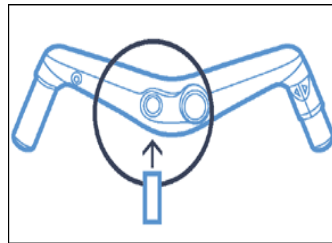
The United States Postal Service, including Concord, New Hampshire postal carriers, and the National Park Service are planning to field test the Segway Human Transporter in 2002.



(Segway LLC)

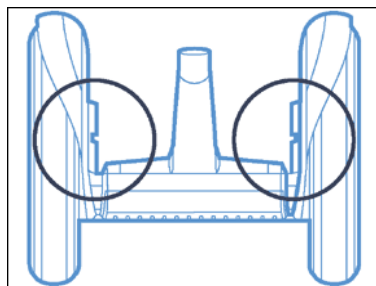
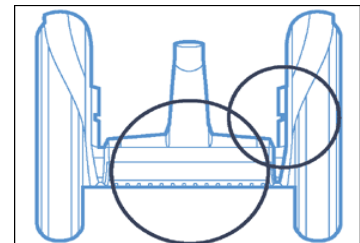
#### Smart Keys

A unique, encrypted key will be required to start each Segway, making them difficult to steal. The keys will also store performance attributes, such as steering controls and limiting the maximum speed. (Segway LLC)



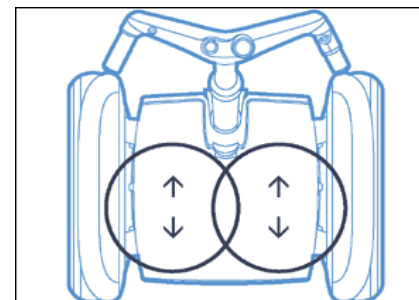
#### Lightweight Body

Die-cast aluminum houses the Segway's batteries, motors, sensors, and other components. The metal helps dissipate heat for all the moving parts, eliminating the need for cooling fans. (Segway LLC)



#### Twin Motors

Each wheel is powered by its own maintenance-free electric motor. If one motor fails, the other can power both wheels. During braking, the motors act like generators to recharge the batteries. (Segway LLC)



#### Balancing Sensors

Gyroscopes and other sensors developed by a British firm help balance and control the vehicle. Although only three gyros are needed, Segway has two back-up gyros for safety. (Segway LLC)

## The NHDOT'S Railroad Safety Inspector Plays A Key Role in the Return of Passenger Rail

*Editor's Note: It took months and even years of work by many people to make the return of passenger rail possible in New Hampshire's seacoast region. One who played a key role in the final months was NHDOT Railroad Safety Inspector John Robinson. We asked John to share his thoughts on his involvement in this ambitious project.*

Coming into the position as the Railroad Safety Inspector in January 2000, I found myself in the "home stretch" of a railroad revitalization project whose initial proposal to operate passenger rail service between Boston and Portland dated back to 1992.

The extensive track up-grades were well under way. Guilford Transportation Industries (the track owner) was preparing to petition the DOT to change the order of protection at the seventeen highway-rail grade crossings along the corridor in our state.

This line, which the railroad calls "The Freight Main Line", runs approximately 38 miles from Plaistow to Rollinsford. While the Federal Railroad Administration monitored the track up-grades, I was directly involved with the many issues of establishing the highest margin of safety at these potentially hazardous intersections.

The installation of the latest state of the art technology, which would accommodate the operation of both higher speed passenger service and the slower moving freight traffic, has made it possible to establish a consistent warning time of 30 seconds regardless of train speed. All the public crossings are now fully gated with 12-inch LED flashing lights and a bell.

During this process, involvement of, and input from each of the towns impacted was crucial. On-site meetings were held with railroad representatives and town officials including selectmen, police and fire chiefs, road agents and school bus operators. While opinions and priorities differed greatly, the open forum kept the process moving forward.

It became immediately apparent that the DOT would be in the role of mediator. Stan Prescott, of Highway Design's Utilities section and myself spent many hours as the liaisons for both the railroad and public officials. It is often a difficult balancing act to promote and police.

Safety was the common concern as the return of higher speed passenger trains after nearly forty years would require an extensive reeducation of local citizens. This would prove to be our biggest challenge.

Operation Lifesaver Inc. is a national non-profit organization in which I am a committee member. Our mission is to increase public awareness as to the dangers of interaction with railroad operations. Grade crossing safety and trespass being our foremost concern. Since early 2000, the NH chapter of Operation Lifesaver has given railroad safety presentations to over ten thousand school children in the seacoast area as well citizens groups and school bus drivers.

Amtrak, the contracted passenger service provider, has conducted emergency response training for local fire, police and EMS personnel.

Overall, the "revival" has received a positive reception with the expected skepticism and criticism that seems to be part of every new venture. While the *Downeaster* will not overcome all the future transportation challenges facing the DOT, its safety record will be a determining factor in the development of other passenger rail services throughout the state. These are potentially historic times and events that I am excited to be a part of.

*(Downeaster - continued from page 1)*

passengers were pleased with the new station building that has the look of an old station but with modern amenities such as a mini-high platform for ease of boarding by disabled passengers and bicycle racks. The Dover Station Committee developed the design working with DOT, and consultant, Vanasse, Hangen, Brustlin (VHB) and architects Sherman, Greiner, Halle.

Similarly in Exeter, DOT, VHB and Sherman, Greiner, Halle worked with the Exeter Station Committee to develop the plans for the mini-high and low platforms, parking, and landscaping, all sited next to the former railroad station.

The UNH/Durham platforms are constructed next to UNH's well-known Dairy Bar, formerly a railroad station used by UNH students. The project included replacing the deteriorating canopy with a new one built with historically correct details like the slate roof.

Two of the projects were funded through the FHWA

program for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality intended for projects that foster ridesharing and reduce the air quality impacts of single occupant vehicles. The UNH project was funded through the FHWA Transportation Enhancement Program because of the historical restoration of a transportation facility.

Bringing the rail service back to New Hampshire involved more than just the construction of stations. All public and private at-grade rail crossings were upgraded. The tracks themselves had rails and ties replaced. Bridges along the railroad corridor were improved to carry the new trains.

The new train will run at least 60 miles/hour, much faster than trains ran previously. For more information about the schedule, service and towns the *Downeaster* serves, check the train's website at [www.thedowneaster.com](http://www.thedowneaster.com).

*(Project Manager Nancy Mayville contributed to this report)*



## *Rails Once Traveled...*



There actually has been a passenger rail option in New Hampshire since the summer of 1989. That's when Amtrak's *Montrealer* made an inaugural run that included a stop in Claremont.

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